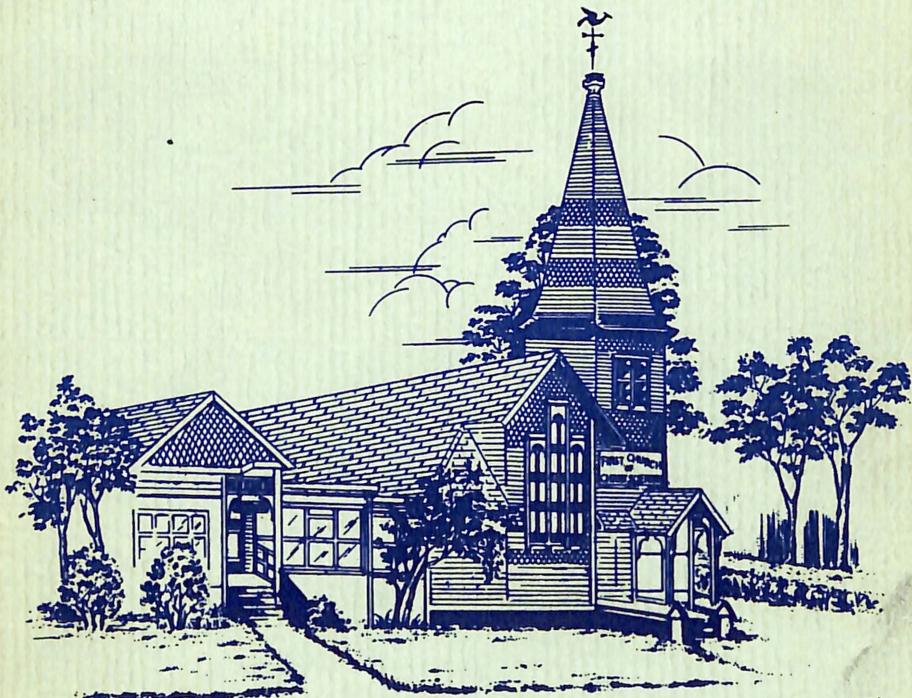


# Highlights Along The Highways

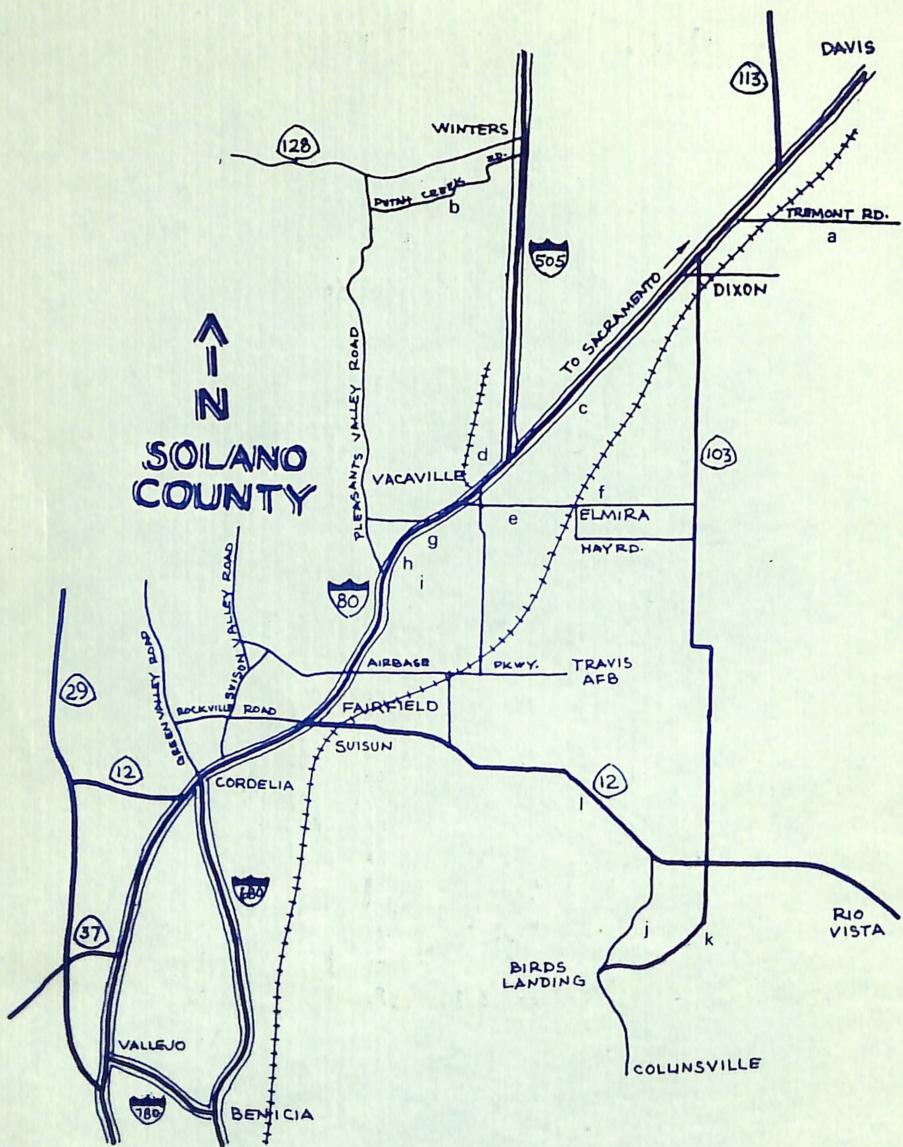
by Mary Higham

Bert Hughes

Gail Campbell



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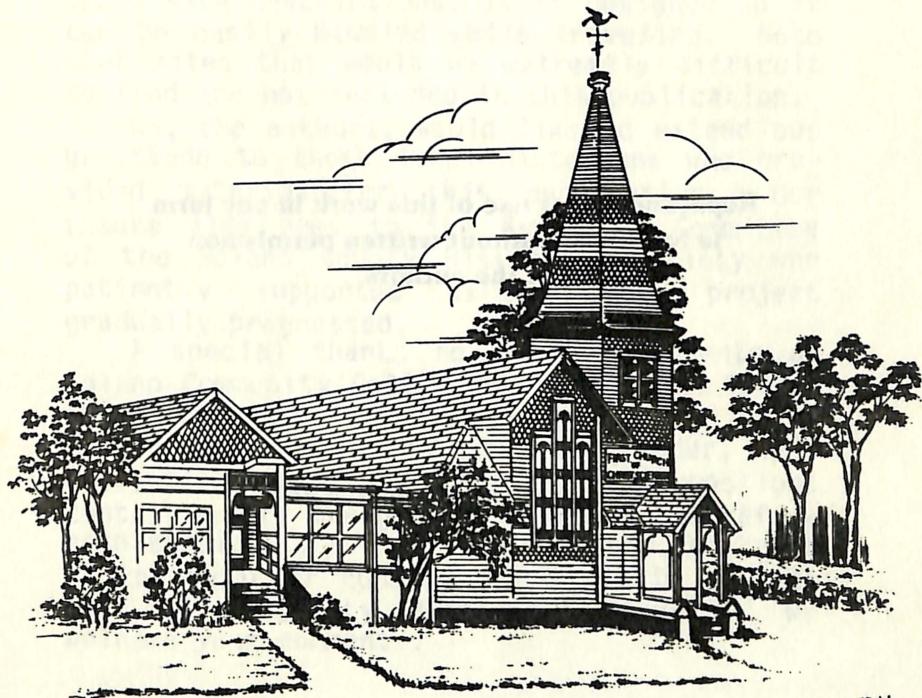


# Highlights Along The Highways

by **Mary Higham**

**Bert Hughes**

**Gail Campbell**



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## PREFACE

HIGHLIGHTS ALONG THE HIGHWAYS has been prepared to give the delegates to the California Conference of Historical Societies Symposium and other interested individuals a listing of some of the historic sites in Solano County. This booklet contains maps and short site descriptions. It is designed so it can be easily handled while traveling. Note that sites that would be extremely difficult to find are not included in this publication.

We, the authors, would like to extend our gratitude to those local historians who provided material for this publication. Our thanks also goes to the Symposium Committee of the Solano County Historical Society who patiently supported us as this project gradually progressed.

A special thanks to the art students at Solano Community College who have contributed their artwork to this endeavor.

It is our wish that you, the reader, will enjoy this booklet. If you have any questions contact one of the groups listed in the reference section, check the bibliography for books on the topic or contact one of us in care of the Solano County Historical Society. We welcome your comments.

Mary Higham  
Bert Hughes  
Gail Campbell

July 22, 1983

## TOURISM

and not tourism but also a third with  
which is the most important. The third is  
a significant indicator which has undergone  
an early decline and no more so than  
the rate of growth declined after 1990  
and especially after 1995 when the  
annual growth rate of tourism fell to  
an average of 1.5% per year. The  
rate of growth for the first two years of  
the decade of 1990-2000 was 4.5% per  
year. The growth rate of publishing  
and bookmaking was 1.5% (Latvian Books  
and Media Museum, 2000). The same  
was true for the magazine industry, the  
rate of growth was 2.5% per year. The  
growth rate of the tourism industry  
was probably the best of these sectors. A  
beginning of growth and a number of new  
tourism products were introduced in 1990  
and 1991, which led to a rate of 11%  
annual growth rate in 1992. In 1993 and 1994  
the rate of growth was 10.5% and 10.7%  
respectively. After 1995 the growth rate  
was reduced to one decimal in 1996 and no  
more than 2.5% in 1997-1999. Growth rates  
in 2000 and 2001 were

10.5% and 11.5% respectively. The growth rate in 2002  
was 10.5% and in 2003 11.5%.

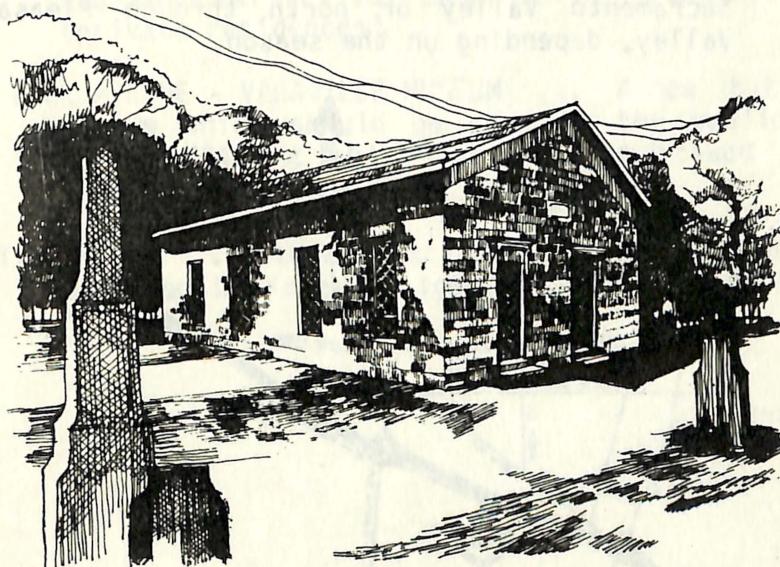
## HIGHLIGHTS ALONG HIGHWAY 80

TREMONT CHURCH (a) ... The Westminster Presbyterian Church located in Tremont was dedicated May 29, 1871. Its architecture is simplified Dutch Renaissance.

WOLFSKILL RANCHO 1842 (b) ... In 1842, John Wolfskill arrived in Solano to occupy the ranch owned by his brother, William. His daughter, Frances Wolfskill Taylor Wilson, bequeathed 107 acres to the University of California at Davis for an experimental farm in 1937.

P.G.E. SUB-STATION (c) ... Dedicated September 30, 1922, this complex was constructed to distribute the power from the Pitt River generators to the San Francisco Bay area.

HARBISON HOUSE (d) ... Josiah Allison settled on the Nut Tree Ranch in 1854. The Harbison House was constructed in 1906 to replace the home that Josiah had built in 1855. On July 4, 1921, his granddaughter sat under the black walnut tree selling figs to passing travelers.



ROCKVILLE STONE CHAPEL

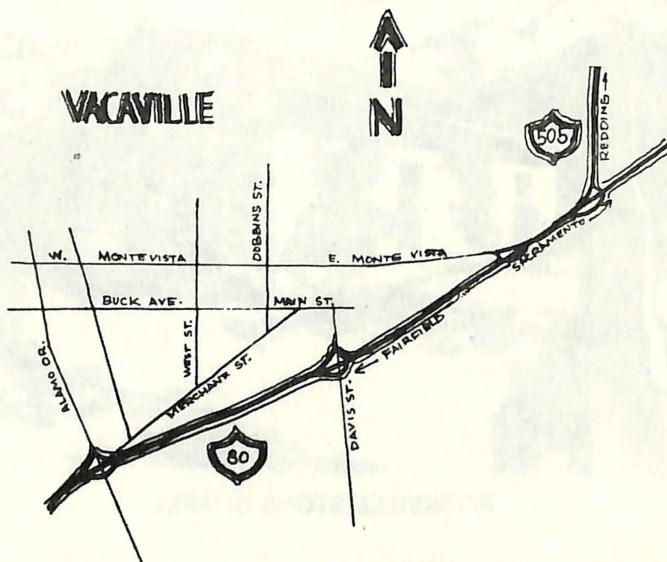
VACAVILLE-ELMIRA CEMETERY (e) ... The land for the original cemetery was donated in the 1850's by Arculus Hawkins and used to bury the Indians that had died on his ranch. Later it became the cemetery for the Vacaville-Elmira area.

ELMIRA (f) ... First called Vaca-Station in 1867. The name was changed when the depot was moved to the junction of the Vaca Valley Clear Lake Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroad. Location of the Grace Shiloh Church 1876.

PENA ADOBE (g) ... Built on Rancho Los Putos, by Juan Felipe Pena. The original Vaca adobe stood 1/4 mile north but was destroyed by an earthquake. Pena Adobe is open Wednesday - Sunday, 9:00 am - 4:30 PM.

LAGOON VALLEY (h) ... In the early 1880's, Elsie Buckingham and Elizabeth Markham ran successful ranches in Lagoon Valley. Mrs. Markham's son, Edwin, wrote the well-known poem, "Man With A Hoe."

SOUTH PASS (i) ... The early trail entered the Lagoon Valley through South Pass, turned east into the Sacramento Valley or north through Pleasants Valley, depending on the season.



## VACAVILLE

620 EAST MAIN ... Old Town Hall (1907). Designed by Frank Steiger and built by F. M. Gray. A joint venture by the town of Vacaville and the County of Solano. Now houses the Vacaville Heritage Council and the Solano County Genealogical Society Library and Research room.

300-560 MAIN STREET ... Most of the business district of Vacaville was destroyed by fire in November 1888. A number of the brick buildings that were constructed in the next several years still line the street.

201-209 DOBBINS STREET ... These buildings represent the last vestige of the Vacaville Oriental business district. Those that stood on the east side of the street where the fire house now stands were razed during World War II to make room for war-time housing.

124 MAIN STREET to 312 BUCK AVENUE ... A fine collection of homes built between 1890 and 1935, including several Victorians, Queen Anne cottages and Colonial Revival examples of architecture. (private residences)

213 BUCK AVENUE - VACAVILLE MUSEUM ... A new history museum which should be open to the public in early 1984. At this time, may be viewed upon special request.

ULATIS BRIDGE ... Located at the East end of Main St. Designed by Frank Steiger in 1911 at a cost of \$7,850.

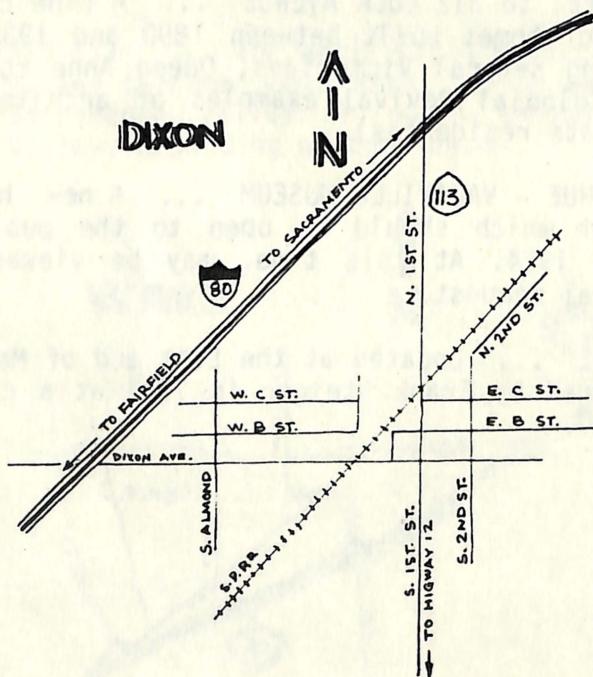
## DIXON

DIXON ... In the late 1860's, Thomas Dickson donated ten acres of land to the Central Pacific Railroad for a depot. Buildings were moved from Silveyville and Maine Prairie by manpower and four horse teams.

DIXON METHODIST CHURCH ... Corner of North Jefferson and West B. Erected in Silveyville in 1866 and moved by mule teams to its present site in 1871.

FOUNTAIN HOUSE ... Sievers Rd. In 1871 Carrie (Ellis) Fountain moved into this house at the age of 7. She remained there until her death in 1969. Some of the furniture from the two story home is in the Harbison House in Vacaville. (private residence.)

SCHULZE HOUSE ... "B" and Third Street. This 14 room two-story modified Victorian was constructed in the early 1870s.



## FAIRFIELD

701-747 BROADWAY ... Circa 1902, wood frame bungalows moved from Cement City after 1929.

825-1010 EMPIRE STREET ... Homes built between 1893-1925.

GOOSEN MANSION ... Corner of Madison and Empire, it was constructed by three Scottish builders for Henry Goosen and completed in December 1910.

CHURCH OF GOD, 928 EMPIRE STREET ... The building was constructed in 1892 to replace the 1860 Methodist Church that had been damaged by the earthquake.

SOLANO COUNTY COURTHOUSE ... Texas at Union Streets, the courthouse was constructed in 1910.

HALL OF JUSTICE ... Formerly Armijo High School, circa 1920. The Hall is located at Texas Street and Union Avenue.

THE COUNTY WATER TOWER ... Empire Street behind the County Jail. An octagonal 50 foot high structure built of reinforced concrete, with crenated parapets. Designed by Frank Steiger in 1918.

## TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE ... Officially became the Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base in 1943. Renamed Travis AFB in 1950 to honor Brig. Gen. Robert F. Travis. A new aeronautical museum is being developed on the Base.

## SUISUN CITY

LAWLER HOUSE ... Constructed 1850-1860. Transported by barge from its original ranch location to its present site June 1979. Remodeled in ante bellum style in 1947.

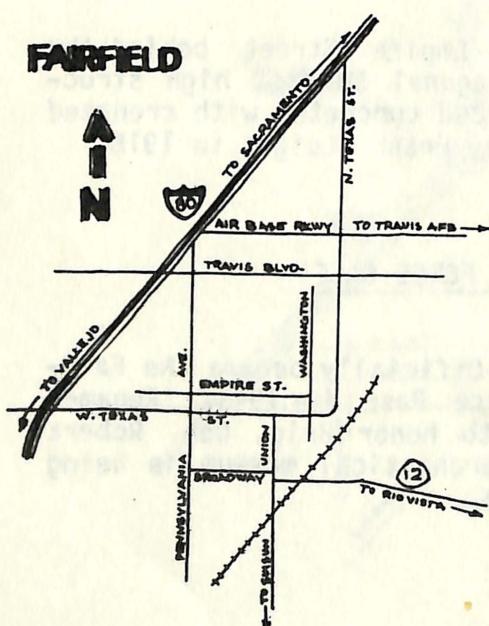
607-701 MAIN STREET ... Business buildings constructed between 1876-1919. 607 Main was the first bank in Suisun City, built in 1876. 623 Main, was constructed in 1888 as the Masonic Lodge.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST ... 901 Main Street. This building was originally an Episcopal Church constructed in 1867. It was remodeled in 1890.

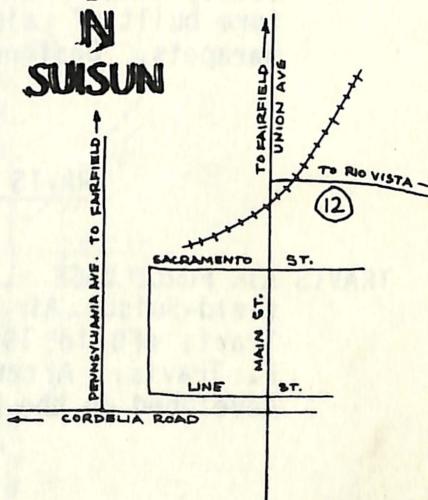
400-511 MORGAN ... Victorian gothics and stick eastlake construction styles. Built in 1869-1890.

420-500 LINE STREET - Homes constructed between 1865-66

## **FAIRFIELD**



## **SUISUN**



## SUISUN VALLEY

ROCKVILLE STONE CHAPEL AND CEMETERY ... Suisun Valley Road. The cornerstone was laid October 3, 1856 on a site donated by Landy Alford and his wife, Sarah.

MARTIN HOUSE ... 283 Suisun Valley near Rockville. Dated 1861, restored 1926-1929. Stone construction in style of English manor house. The house is now called "Stonedeen." (private residence)

BALDWIN STONE BARN ... 4574 Suisun Valley Road. The barn was built in 1865 by J. M. Baldwin. (private property)

GOMER SCHOOL ... Abernathy Road. Built circa 1900. Now used as school for handicapped.

CORDELIA ... Second oldest town in Solano County. The location of Thompson's Corner, one of the oldest saloons in the area. South of the railroad tracks are three privately owned Victorian homes. Cobblestones for the streets of San Francisco came from Nelson's Quarry, east of Cordelia. Near the quarry is the only railroad tunnel in Solano County.

## GREEN VALLEY

GREEN VALLEY ... Green Valley Road. Sutter brought equipment and supplies, purchased from the Russians at Fort Ross, through Green Vale on his way to Sutter's Fort. The Stiltz residence constructed in 1847, and the Dingley Mill remain in Green Valley. Granville Swift's home, which he purchased in the 1860's, is now the Green Valley Country Club.

## HIGHLIGHTS ALONG HIGHWAY 12

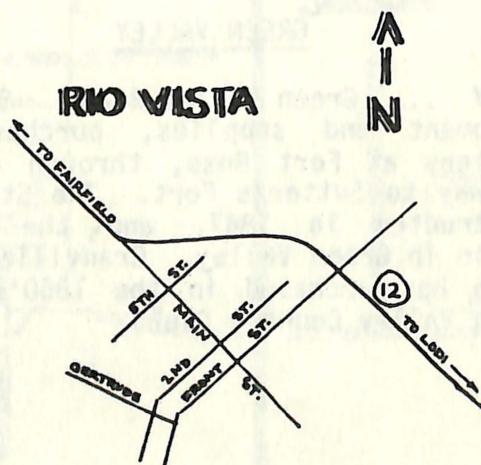
COLLINSVILLE ... Named for C. J. Collins, who arrived in 1859. The town plat was surveyed in 1861. In the late 1800's salmon canning was the principal industry.

HASTINGS ADOBE (j) ... (Montezuma Adobe) Built by Lansford W. Hastings in 1846. On P. G. & E. property.

SHILOH CHURCH (k) ... Four miles north of Bird's Landing on Collinsville Road. Cemetery has been in use since 1875. Built by the Cumberland Presbyterians in 1876.

BIRD'S LANDING ... Named for John Bird who purchased 1000 acres of land in 1865. Benjamin's Store, established in 1875, is still in business.

CALIFORNIA RAILWAY MUSEUM (l) ... On Highway 12 between Rio Vista and Fairfield. Collection includes 70 antique street and railroad cars, many of which operate on 4½ miles of track. Rides are available. The museum bookstore has the State's largest collection of railroad literature. Open Saturday and Sunday from Noon to 5:00 PM, admission ranges from \$1 to \$3.



## RIO VISTA

RIO VISTA MUSEUM ... 16 N. Front Street, between Main and Sacramento Streets. A history museum. Open Saturday and Sunday, 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM, or by appointment. Admission is free.

FOSTERS' BIG HORN ... 143 Main Street. The world's largest private collection of mounted animals. Established in 1931 by William Foster.

DUTRA DREDGING COMPANY ... Has maintained the flood control levees since 1904 for the 1100 square mile Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The Dutra Company is the only one of its kind in the world.

DUTRA MUSEUM ... 345 Gertrudes St. Call for appointment (707) 374-5015. Dutra Museum is a private collection of material reflecting the history of side draft clam shell dredging in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

BLACKWELDER's ... 101 Blackwelder Drive. Bert Blackwelder's blacksmith shop opened in 1902 at Birds Landing. It was moved to Rio Vista in 1935. The first sugar beet harvester designed by Schmidt and Jongeneel was constructed here in 1940.

LARSEN MANSION ... 240 2nd St. Constructed in 1897-98 with Capt. Peter Larsen and C. Campbell as architects. Larsen, a former sea captain, owned the Sullivan and Larsen Lumber Company and hand picked the lumber for the two story modified Victorian. (private residence)

BENICIA

BENICIA STATE CAPITAL ... Built in 1852 as a city hall; was California's third state capitol in 1853-54. Used as the County Court House 1854-1858.

FISCHER-HANLON HOUSE ... 137 West G. Originally constructed as a hotel. The building was moved to this location in 1856. It was used as a residence until 1969, when it was donated to the State of California as a historic house museum.

WASHINGTON HOUSE ... 333 First St. Erected in 1850. At times used as a hotel, Chinese lottery, bordello, artist studio. Now a shop and a restaurant.

SALT-BOX HOUSE ... 145 West D Street. Pre-fabricated on the east coast and shipped to California during the Gold Rush (private residence).

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ... First and J Streets. Constructed in 1859 by Scandinavian shipwrights. The Rectory, built in 1790 in Torrington, Connecticut, was dismantled in 1864, shipped to Benicia and reassembled at its present site.

FIRST MASONIC TEMPLE ... 110 West J Street. The first Masonic Lodge Hall built in the State of California. Dedicated in 1850.

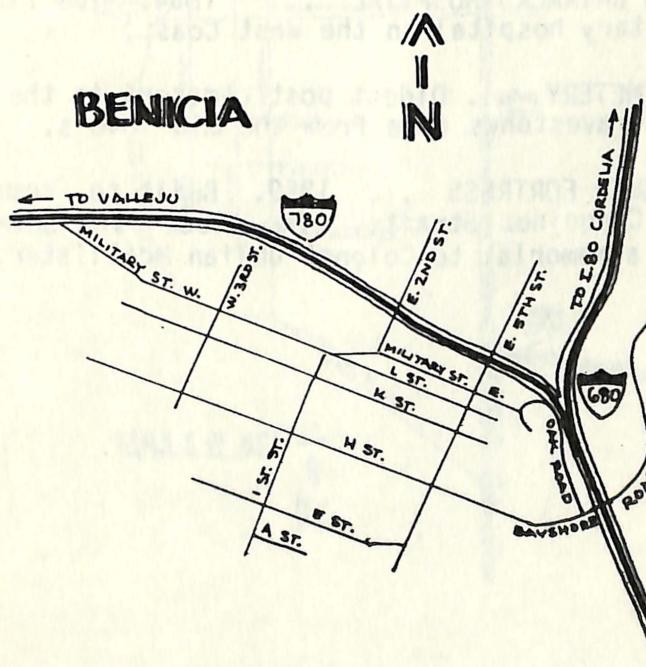
CAPTAIN WALSH'S HOME ... 235 East I Street. One of three identical homes shipped around the Horn in 1849. One of the other homes was the residence of General Mariano Vallejo in Sonoma. (private residence)

ST. DOMINIC'S CHURCH ... 475 East I Street. Originally constructed in 1852. New church built in 1890. The first permanent location of the Dominican Fathers in the West.

ST. DOMINIC'S CEMETERY ... East Fifth and Hillcrest Avenue. Grave site of Sister Mary Dominica (Concepcion Arguello), first native daughter of California to join the order.

UNION HOTEL ... 401 First Street. Established 1882 and recently restored.

THE BISHOP'S HOUSE ... 36 Wingfield Way. Residence of Bishop Wingfield, 1876-1898, when he supervised St. Mary's College of the Pacific and the Episcopalian College of St. Augustine. (private residence)



BENICIA INDUSTRIAL PARK (U.S. BENICIA ARSENAL)

BENICIA ARSENAL ... At the end of Military East Highway. Captain Charles P. Stone, with 21 enlisted men, established the Benicia Arsenal as an Ordnance Depot in August 1851.

GUARD AND ENGINE HOUSE ... 1872. Third guard house on the Arsenal grounds; includes fire engine house.

COMMANDANT'S HOUSE ... ca. 1860. A twenty room mansion of Georgian design with fourteen foot ceilings. The parquet flooring and wainscot paneling were shipped from the East around the Horn.

CAMEL BARNS ... 1853. Constructed as warehouses but for a brief time housed the camels of the U.S. Camel Corps.

POWDER MAGAZINE ... 1857. The vaulted ceilings supported by hand-carved Corinthian pillars are a fine example of French artisans skill.

BENICIA BARRACKS HOSPITAL ... 1854. The first military hospital on the West Coast.

POST CEMETERY ... Oldest post cemetery in the country. Gravestones date from the mid 1840's.

CLOCKTOWER FORTRESS ... 1859. Built to command the Carquinez Straits. The clock is a Seth Thomas, a memorial to Colonel Julian McAllister.

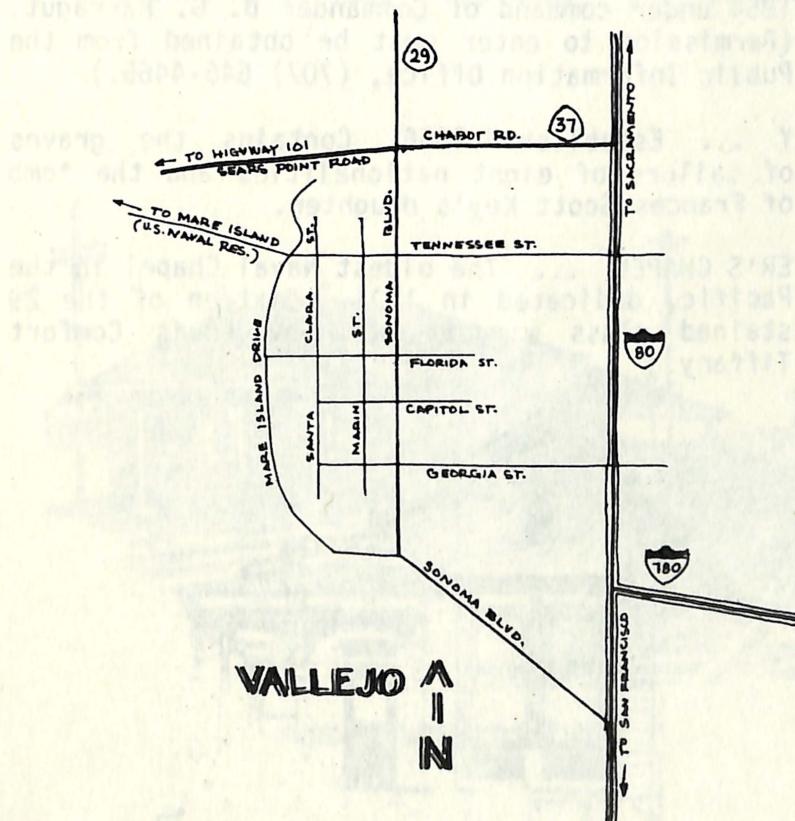
## VALLEJO

### ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE DISTRICT ...

Bounded by Carolina, York, Sutter and Monterey Streets. Contains many older homes including an 1868 Georgian, 1863 Gothic Revival and 1911 Crafts- man. (private residences)

### OLD TOWN DISTRICT ...

Bounded by Sacramento, Virginia, Sonoma and York Streets. Buildings were constructed in the early 1900's. Note the three story Beaux Art, built in 1900 at 337 Georgia Street and the 1923 Greek Revival at 330 Georgia Street. Additional structures may be found in the area bounded by Carolina, Santa Clara, Maryland and Sutter Streets.



STATE CAPITAL ...

Marker is located at the corner of Georgia and Sacramento Streets. The official seat of State government from February 4, 1851 to February 4, 1853.

THE VALLEJO NAVAL AND HISTORICAL MUSEUM ...

734 Marin Street in the old City Hall Building. Features local history, naval history and traveling exhibits. Open Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM, Saturday, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Admission: Adults 50¢, students and children 25¢.

MARE ISLAND NAVAL SHIPYARD

MARE ISLAND ... Named "Isla Plana" by Ayala in 1775. Became a U.S. Navy installation on September 16, 1854 under command of Commander D. G. Farragut. (Permission to enter must be obtained from the Public Information Office, (707) 646-4465.)

CEMETERY ... Established 1856. Contains the graves of sailors of eight nationalities and the tomb of Frances Scott Key's daughter.

ST. PETER'S CHAPEL ... The oldest Naval Chapel in the Pacific, dedicated in 1901. Sixteen of the 29 stained glass windows were by Louis Comfort Tiffany.



## SOLANO LAND GRANTS

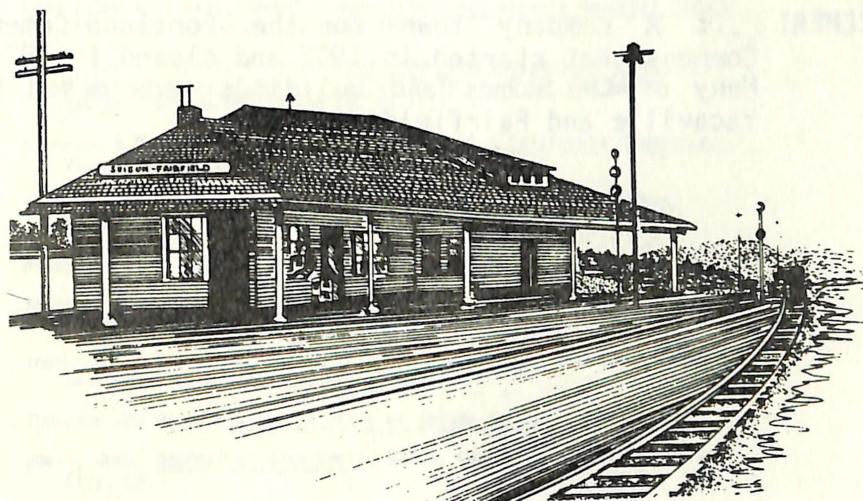
RANCHO SUISUN ... To Francisco Solano, who petitioned January 16, 1837 for Four Square Leagues - approved 17,754 acres.

RANCHO TOLENAS ... To Jose Francisco Armijo, who petitioned November 1839 for Three Square Leagues - approved 13,315 acres.

RANCHO LOS PUTOS ... To Juan Manuel Vaca and Juan Felipe Pena, who petitioned June 6, 1842 for Ten Square Leagues - approved 44,000 acres.

RANCHO RIO de LOS PUTOS ... To William Wolfskill, who petitioned 1842 - approved 17,754 acres.

RANCHO LOS ULPINOS ... To John Bidwell, who petitioned April 1844 - approved 17,726 acres.



SUISUN-FAIRFIELD DEPOT

## SETTLEMENTS THAT NO LONGER EXIST

MAINE PRAIRIE ... Established in 1859 as a shipping and trading point. After the 1862 flood, the town was rebuilt on higher ground. With the arrival of the railroad in 1868, many of the buildings were moved to Dixon.

SILVEYVILLE ... In 1852 Elijah A. Silvey constructed a hotel on the trail to Sacramento. Buildings were moved to Dixon when the new railroad depot was established there.

DENVERTON ... First called Nurse's Landing for Dr. S. K. Nurse who built a wharf and warehouse here. Changed to Denverton in 1858 to honor D. W. Denver, a member of Congress from the district.

BINGHAMTON ... After the flood of 1862, a group of Union sympathizers banded together and established a military company. They constructed an armory which later became the social hall and school. The cemetery on Highway 113 south of Dixon marks the location of the former town.

CEMENT ... A company town for the Portland Cement Company that started in 1902 and closed in 1927. Many of the homes and buildings were moved to Vacaville and Fairfield.

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## RESOURCES

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

BENICIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 831 First Street, Benicia, CA 94510.

DIXON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 201 South First Street, Dixon, CA 95620.

FAIRFIELD-SUISUN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 1111 Webster St., Fairfield, CA.

RIO VISTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 60 Main Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571.

VACAVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 400 East Monte Vista Avenue, Vacaville, CA 95688.

VALLEJO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 2 Florida Street, Vallejo, CA 94590.

### LIBRARIES:

BENICIA CITY LIBRARY, 144 East G Street, Benicia, CA 94510.

DIXON PUBLIC LIBRARY, 135 East B Street, Dixon, CA 95620.

FAIRFIELD-SUISUN COMMUNITY LIBRARY, 1150 Kentucky St., Fairfield, CA.

JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY, 505 Santa Clara Street, Vallejo, CA 94590.

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY, 4000 Suisun Valley Road, Suisun, CA 94585.

VACAVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 600 Merchant Street, Vacaville, CA 95688.

### NEWSPAPERS:

DAILY REPUBLIC, (Publishes an historic edition on December 31 of each calendar year.) 1250 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

DIXON TRIBUNE - Dixon, CA. Centennial Edition, October 10, 1968

VALLEJO TIMES HERALD - Vallejo, CA. Mare Island Centennial Edition, September 16, 1954.

BENICIA HERALD - Benicia, CA. Old Timer's Special Edition, 1939.

RIVER NEWS HERALD - Rio Vista, CA. 75th Anniversary Edition. January, 1966.

VACAVILLE REPORTER - Vacaville, CA. Centennial Edition. March, 1983.

SOCIETIES, MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE GROUPS:

BENICIA HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION, 350 West I Street, Benicia, CA 94510.

BENICIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P. O. Box 773, Benicia, CA 94510.

CENTRAL SOLANO COUNTY CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION, Carolyn Sheldon, 5336 Suisun Valley Road, Suisun, CA 94585.

PRESERVE ALL SOLANO'S TREASURES (P.A.S.T.), Mary Higham, 5272 Williams Road, Suisun, CA 94585.

RIO VISTA MUSEUM, 16 North Front Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571.

SOLANO COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, P. O. Box 2494, Fairfield, CA 94533.

SOLANO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P. O. Box 922, Vallejo, CA 94590.

VACAVILLE HERITAGE COUNCIL, P. O. Box 477, Vacaville, CA 95696.

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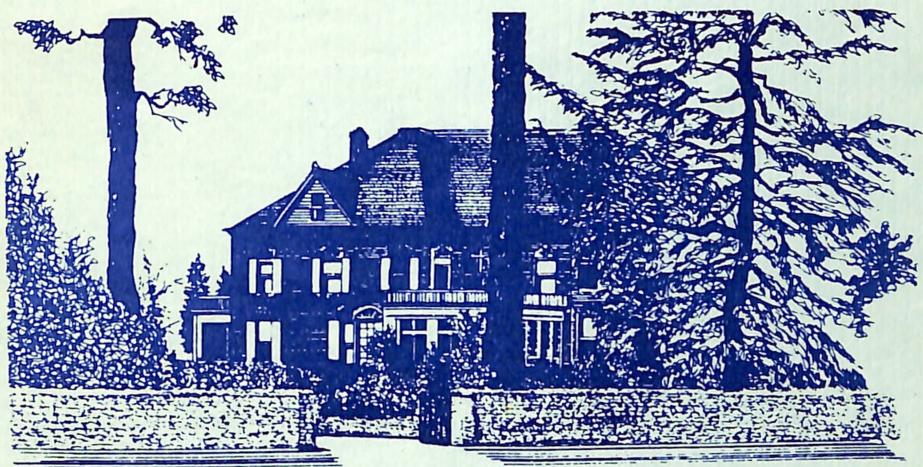
RIO VISTA CITY HALL, 1 Main Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571.

VACAVILLE CITY HALL, 650 Merchant Street, Vacaville, CA 95688.

VACAVILLE REPORTER CENTENNIAL EDITION, Vacaville Reporter, March 1983.

VALLEJO CITY HALL, 555 Santa Clara St., Vallejo, CA 94590.





BUCK MANSION - VACAVILLE

